

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-41, 43, 44, 48, 50, 52, 54, 56, 58, 60, 62, 64-66, 68, 69, 71, 73, 75, 76, 78-83, 85-87, 89 and 91-98 were previously cancelled. Claims 42, 49, 51, 55, 57, 59, 61, 63, 74, 77 and 84 are currently amended. Claims 45-47, 53, 67, 70, 72, 88 and 90 are carried forward, as is follows.

Claims 1-41 (Cancelled)

42. (Currently Amended) A longitudinal former of a web-processing machine comprising:

a longitudinal web former support body adapted to form a longitudinal fold in a continuous web moving in a web travel direction over said web former support body;

first and second leg areas of said web former support body, said first and second leg areas each extending generally in said web travel direction, each having a rigid, air permeable leg area support surface, both said first and second leg areas ~~and~~ being adapted to ~~both~~ concurrently engage ~~thea~~ web being longitudinally folded during travel of the web over said web former support body, said first and second leg areas of said web former support body converging in said web travel direction with respect to each other, and at an acute angle;

a nose section of said web former support body, said nose section of said web former support body being located at a convergence of said first and second converging leg areas of said web former support body, said nose section of said web former support body having a rigid, air permeable nose support surface adapted to engage the web being longitudinally ~~formed~~ ~~folded~~ by said longitudinal web ~~former~~ ~~formed~~ support body, said nose section defining a longitudinal fold to be imparted to the web moving over said web former support body;

a first surface layer of a micro-porous air permeable material on said support surfaces of each of said first and second converging leg areas of said web former support body, said first surface layer having a plurality of micro-openings of open pores of said micro-porous, air permeable material for the exit of a fluid under pressure and with a mean diameter of less than ~~150~~500 μm , said first surface layer providing a first fluid output between said leg support surfaces and the web moving over said web former support body and having a first fluid permeability per unit of area; and

a second surface layer of a micro-porous, air permeable material on said nose support surface of said nose section of said web former support body, said second surface layer having a plurality of micro-openings of open pores of said micro-porous material for the exit of fluid under pressure and with a mean diameter of less than ~~150~~500 μm , said second surface layer providing a second fluid output, greater than said first fluid output, between said nose support surface and the web moving over said web former support body, and having a second fluid permeability per unit of area, said second fluid permeability being greater than said first fluid permeability.

43. (Cancelled)

44. (Cancelled)

45. (Previously Presented) The former of claim 42 wherein said pores have a mean diameter of 5 to 50 μm .

46. (Previously Presented) The former of claim 42 wherein said micro-porous, air permeable

material is an open-pored sinter material.

47. (Previously Presented) The former of claim 42 wherein said micro-porous, air permeable material is an open-pored sinter metal.

48. (Cancelled)

49. (Currently Amended) The former of claim 42 wherein said web former support body is load bearing and encloses a hollow space, said first and second layers being supported by said support body.

50. (Cancelled)

51. (Currently Amended) The former of claim 49 wherein said web formera support body connected with said first and second surface layers has a plurality of openings adapted to supply fluid to said first and second surface layers.

52. (Cancelled)

53. (Previously Presented) The former of claim 51 wherein said first and second surface layers have a thickness between 0.05 mm and 0.3 mm.

54. (Cancelled)

55. (Currently Amended) The former of claim 49 wherein said web former support body has a plurality of passages.

56. (Cancelled)

57. (Currently Amended) The former of claim 49 wherein said web former support body has a wall supporting said first and second surface layers, said wall having a wall thickness of greater than 3 mm.

58. (Cancelled)

59. (Currently Amended) The former of claim 49 wherein said web former support body is a porous material having an air permeability greater than said micro-porous, air permeable material.

60. (Cancelled)

61. (Currently Amended) The former of claim 49 wherein said web former support body includes a flat material including said hollow space.

62. (Cancelled)

63. (Currently Amended) The former of claim 49 wherein in each of said first and second angularly converging leg areas, said web former support body is a tube provided with

passages.

64. (Cancelled)

65. (Cancelled)

66. (Cancelled)

67. (Previously Presented) The former of claim 42 wherein said micro-openings allow passage of 1 to 20 standard cubic meters of air per hour.

68. (Cancelled)

69. (Cancelled)

70. (Previously Presented) The former of claim 42 wherein said micro-porous, air permeable material is charged with an excess pressure of at least 1 bar.

71. (Cancelled)

72. (Previously Presented) The former of claim 42 wherein said micro-porous, air permeable material is charged with an excess pressure of at least 4 bar.

73. (Cancelled)

74. (Currently Amended) The former of claim 42 further including a feed line adapted to feed fluid to said web former support body, said feed line having an interior area of less than 100 mm².

75. (Cancelled)

76. (Cancelled)

77. (Currently Amended) The former of claim 42 wherein said micro-openings are formed in an insert which is releasably secured to said web former support body ~~of said former~~.

78-83. (Cancelled)

84. (Currently Amended) The former of claim 42 further including a first hollow chamber adapted to supply said first and second leg areas of said web former support body with fluid and a second hollow chamber adapted to supply said nose section of said web former support body with fluid.

85-87. (Cancelled)

88. (Previously Presented) The former of claim 84 wherein a pressure in said first hollow chamber is different from a pressure in said second hollow chamber.

89. (Cancelled)

90. (Previously Presented) The former of claim 42 wherein an air exit rate in each of said first and second leg areas is between 2 to 15 standard cubic meters per m^2 and an air exit rate in said nose section is between 7 and 20 standard cubic meters per m^2 and further wherein said nose section air exit rate is greater than each said first and second leg area air exit rate.

91-98. (Cancelled)